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SUBJECT: January 6 MFA PRESS BRIEFING: MIDDLE EAST, SOMALI PIRACY,  
FINANCIAL CRISIS

11. Key points at the January 6 MFA press briefing:

-- China has told "relevant parties" to "stop military action" in the Middle East.

-- Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao fishing vessels can apply for protection from the Chinese naval flotilla in the sea off Somalia through appropriate channels.

-- The Chinese Government takes the financial crisis "seriously" and has taken measures to "help affected companies and laid-off workers" as well as ensure "stable and relatively rapid" economic growth.

-- The Deputy Secretary's visit demonstrates that "the United States attaches great importance" to the celebration of the 30th anniversary of U.S.-China diplomatic relations.

Violence in the Middle East  
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12. China has told "relevant parties" to "stop military action" in the Middle East and has provided humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, said Qin. Only by ceasing armed conflict and easing the humanitarian crisis can talks resume, said Qin. Although asked directly whether China's Special Envoy to the Middle East Sun Bigan plans to travel to the region to help negotiate a peace, Qin would only confirm that Sun has been meeting with foreign diplomats in China to express China's position on the issue.

Somali Piracy Protection  
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13. Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao fishing vessels can apply for protection from the Chinese naval detachment operating in the sea off Somalia through appropriate channels, said Qin. Residents of these regions are all Chinese and the Chinese Government will protect the safety of Chinese people abroad, he added.

Financial Crisis  
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14. China is taking "active and effective measures" to counter the financial crisis and "increase domestic demand," said the spokesman. The Chinese Government takes the crisis "seriously" and has taken measures to "help affected companies and laid-off workers" as well as to ensure "stable and relatively rapid" economic growth.

Cancellation of Secretary of State Visit to China  
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15. The United States has "explained the reasons" for the cancellation of Secretary Rice's trip to China, said Qin. The Deputy Secretary's visit demonstrates that "the United States attaches great importance" to the celebration of the 30th anniversary of U.S.-China diplomatic relations. The spokesperson did not have specific information about the Deputy Secretary's meetings but said that the "Chinese side looks forward to" Deputy

Secretary Negroponte's visit.

#### Xinjiang Arrests

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[¶](#)6. Asked about reports that an unusually large number of arrests were made in 2008 in Xinjiang for crimes involving state security, Qin said that the issue is "not relevant to the MFA."

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